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ABSTRACT

This learning module is designed to provide the prospective teacher of English as a second language with suggestions for practical applications of sound linguistic theory for teaching writing to second-language learners. After completing the module, the student is expected to be able to: (a) define the role of writing in foreign and second-language learning, (b) identify the specific stages of development in teaching writing to second-language learners, (c) prepare an activity for a specific grade and proficiency level based on the views of one author in the learning activities section of the module, and (d) evaluate an English as a second language (ESL) composition textbook through the application of specific criteria. A basic overview of writing in relation to teaching English as a second language is presented, after which the student is given a choice of several enabling activities, including reading, library research, seminar attendance, and the conducting of interviews. Pre- and post-assessment instruments are included. (HMD)

ED 095139

TEACHER CORPS BILINGUAL PROJECT
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
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MODULAR SEQUENCE:
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

TTP 001.11 WRITING

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SP008 317

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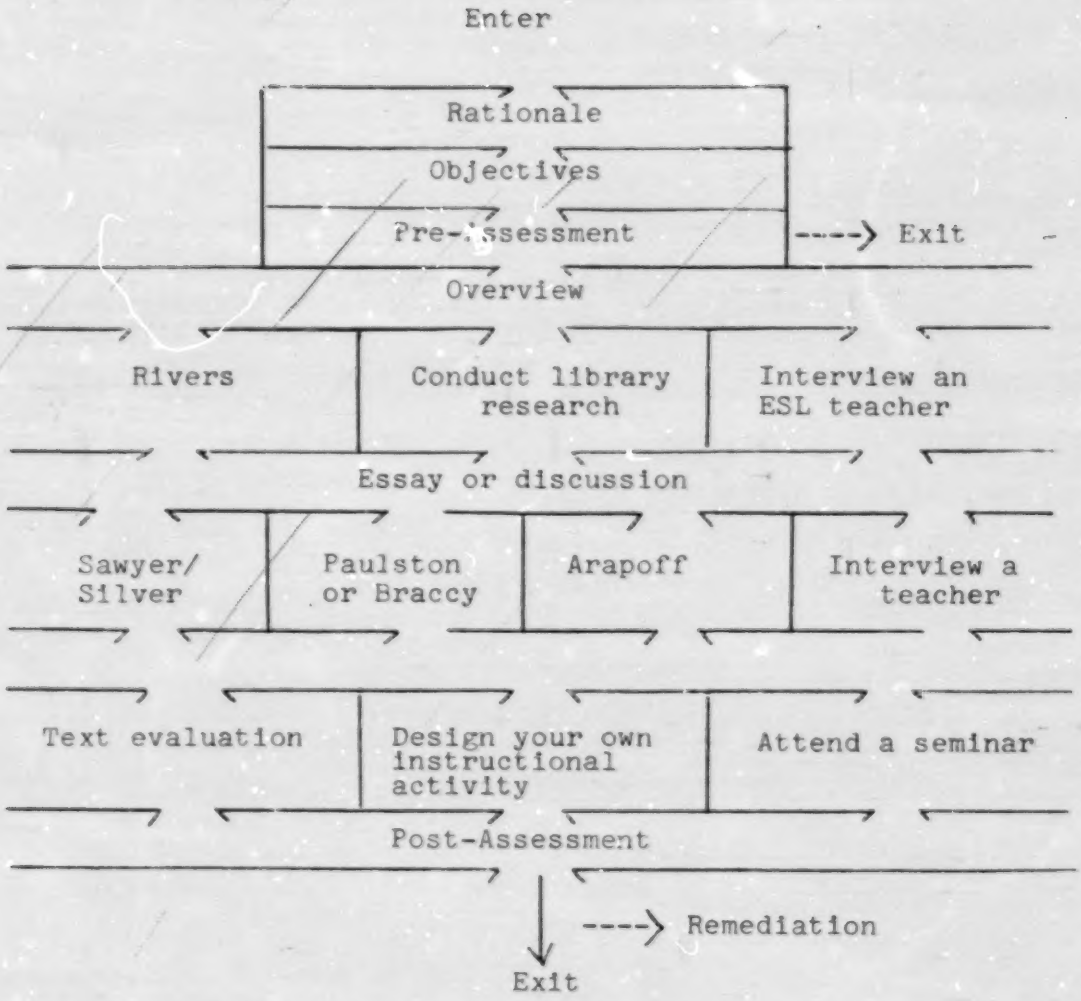
WRITING


Enter
Rationale
Objectives
Pre-Assessment
Exit
Overview
Rivers
Conduct library research
Interview an ESL teacher
Essay or discussion
Sawyer/ Silver
Paulston or Braccy
Arapoff
Interview a teacher
Text evaluation
Design your own instructional activity
Attend a seminar
Post-Assessment
Remediation
Exit

RATIONALE

Although it is generally recognized that receptive or recognition phases of learning precede active or productive phases, there is "no impression without expression."[1] Many contemporary linguistic authorities agree that while writing in second-language learning should not take precedence as the major skill to be developed, it should assume its rightful place among the skills to be learned. "Apart from its intrinsic interest or value, (writing) is an essential classroom activity."[2]

As in any language program, the major questions regarding writing in second-language learning situations concern what to teach, how to teach, and what materials to use. This unit of work will provide the participant with suggestions for practical applications of sound linguistic theory for teaching writing to second-language learners.

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[1]Theodore Huebener, How to Teach Foreign Languages Effectively (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p.75.

[2]Wilga M. Rivers, Teaching Foreign-Language Skills (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p.241.

OBJECTIVES

Given a series of activities on teaching writing to second-language learners, the participant will be able to:

-define the role of writing in foreign and second-language learning.

-identify the specific stages of development in teaching writing to second-language learners.

-prepare an activity for a specific grade and proficiency level based on the views of one author in the learning activities of this unit of work.

-evaluate an ESL composition textbook through the application of specific criteria.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

To assess your prior mastery of the terminal objectives of this unit of work, complete the following exercise. Your performance on this assessment will determine which learning tasks you are to perform.

Directions: Answer the following questions according to the directions noted in each.

I. What is the role of writing in foreign and second-language learning?

II. Should writing take precedence as the major skill to be developed? Why?

III. Define the following:

A. Notation

B. Composition

C. Controlled Composition

D. Dictation

E. Recombination

V. Enumerate the specific stages of development in teaching writing to second-language learners.

OVERVIEW

When the ESL teacher comes to realize the essentiality of teaching writing and ceases to relegate the area to last position in the sequence of language skills, the problems of teaching writing are compounded by the special needs of second-language learners. The major questions concern what to teach, what materials to use, and how to teach. The minor yet pertinent areas include methods of correction and revision.

Although the primary goal of any writing program is to provide the students with the necessary tools for composition skill-building, the specific skills a teacher focuses on can vary greatly. While the definition of each may vary somewhat among linguistic authorities, the following list suggests the wide range of possibilities:

1. Copying
2. Dictation
3. Writing previous pattern practice from memory
4. Arranging words into a sentence or scrambled sentences into a paragraph
5. Composing sentences from a substitution table
6. Filling blanks or completion in sentences
   a. With alternatives given for that sentence
   b. With words given from a list
   c. With word given, form to be chosen
   d. Free choice

7. Transforming sentences
   a. Changing number, time, etc.
   b. Substituting one item for another (pronominal for name, etc.)
8. Inserting material into a sentence (embedding)
9. Adding punctuation and capitals to a paragraph
10. Combining two sentences (a. compound, b. complex)
11. Answering a question
12. Producing a sentence using specific words and tense
13. Paraphrasing a sentence (perhaps using a specific style)
14. Writing unrelated sentences from a cue (picture, object, subject)
15. Controlled composition
    a. Memorized composition (anecdote, etc.)
    b. Given mode, but with prescribed changes (number, tense, point of view, style, etc.)
    c. Given model with missing (topic, concluding, supporting) sentence to insert
    d. Given model, changing ending
    e. Given incomplete model to finish or introduce
    f. Given topic sentence or concluding sentence
    g. Given outline
    h. Using specific words, constructions, or tense
    i. Given series of pictures - like comicstrips - to describe
    j. Translating
    k. Writing a précis or outline
    l. Given facts, constructing a paragraph

m. Retelling story or reading from memory

n. Answering a letter

o. Given a visual cue (picture) telling what happened before, what is happening, what will happen, or relating it to self

p. Given incident, writing reaction, conclusion, etc.

q. Writing with controlled structures (two clause limit, three modifications limit, two levels of clause limit)

r. Given subject

16. Free composition

The following activities will provide the participant with explanations and specific uses of many of the above skills.

I. Learning Alternatives

A. Select one of the following:

1. Read:

Rivers, Wilga M. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 240-260.

Activity: In reading this selection focus your attention on the following questions:

a. What is the role of writing in second-language learning in the high school?

b. Why should writing be considered "the handmaid" of the other second-language skills?

c. Should translation be encouraged? Why?

d. How does Rivers distinguish between writing practice and composition?

e. What are the four major areas of learning involved in the writing process?

f. Restate Rivers' five stages of development in teaching writing to a second-language learner.

g. Should a teacher insist on an absolute standard of accuracy in writing exercises?

2. Conduct library research to determine the following:

a. The role of writing in a second-language classroom.

b. The stages of development in teaching writing to a second-language learner.

3. Interview an ESL teacher to determine points 2a and 2b.

Activity: Prepare an essay or conduct a discussion on your findings.

B. Select one of the following:

1. Read:

Sawyer, Jesse O. and Shirley Kling Silver, "Dictation in Language Learning," in Allen, Harold B. and Russell N. Campbell. Teaching English as a Second Language: A Book of Readings. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), pp. 222-229.

Activity: Restate the value of text dictations as a first step toward writing compositions. Include the recommended procedure for teaching such dictations.

2. Read:

Paulston, Christina B. "Teaching Writing in the E.S.O.L. Classroom: Technique of Controlled Composition." TESOL Quarterly VI (March, 1972), pp. 333-59.

Activity: Considering the role of writing in foreign and second-language teaching, restate the motives, objectives, procedures, and techniques of teaching writing as stated in this article.

3. Read:

Braccy, Maryruth, "Controlled Writing vs. Free Composition," TESOL Quarterly V (September, 1971), 239.

4. Read:

Arapoff, Nancy, "Writing: A Thinking Process," in Allen and Campbell. Teaching English as a Second Language: A Book of Readings. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), pp. 199-207.

Activity: Consider the following questions:

a. What is Arapoff's basis for insisting that writing is a thinking process?

b. Do you agree that reading is a passive process?

Prepare a dialogue similar to the one Arapoff presents on p.203. Using her model, prepare samples of the various types of writing that follow her dialogue. What specific skills are required for each type that could constitute a problem in teaching writing?

5. Interview a teacher to determine suggested techniques for teaching writing to second-language learners.

C. Select <u>one</u> of the following:

1. Evaluate a textbook designated by its publisher as an ESL composition text. Application of the following criteria should readily demonstrate the relative merits of such a text:

a. Teaching aims

1.) Handwriting

2.) Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)

3.) Vocabulary

4.) Structure

5.) Sentence improvement

6.) Paragraph organization

7.) Précis

8.) Essay

b. Achievement of aims

1.) Type and adequacy of drills

2.) Structure and vocabulary controls

3.) Relevance to student's lives

c. Supplementary materials

d. Text characteristics (physidal size of print, attractiveness, illustrations, etc.)

e. Intended audience

2. Design your own instructional activity.

3. Attend a seminar as scheduled by your module coordinator.

POST-ASSESSMENT

Directions: Answer the following questions according to the directions noted in each.

I. What is the role of writing in foreign and second-language learning? (short essay)

II. What stages of development does the teacher consider in teaching writing to second-language learners? (outline)

III. What criteria can the teacher apply in evaluating an ESL composition? (short essay)

IV. Prepare a composition activity for a specific grade and proficiency level based on the views of one author in the learning activities of this unit of work. Submit your activity to your module coordinator for evaluation.

Competency will be certified when your module coordinator has ascertained that the submitted post-assessment is of acceptable quality.

Remediation: Alternate learning activities are available on a contractual basis with the module coordinator.

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1. Allen, Harold B. and Russell N. Campbell. Teaching English as a Second Language. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1972.

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5. Paulston, Christina Bratt, "Teaching Writing in the E.S.O.L. Classroom: Technique of Controlled Composition," TESOL Quarterly VI (March 1972).

6. Rivers, Wilga M. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.